THE LIFE AND DEATH OF DORCAS.

VVHEREIN, HEE that pleaseth to reade, may finde both good direction for the ordering of his Course:

AND

A necessary warning to be prepared for his End.

By SAMVEL HIERON.

Psalm.92. ver.12.

The righteous shall flourish like a Palme tree, and shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon.

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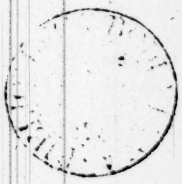


TO MY MVCH HONOURED Lady, the Ladie MARGARET HELE of Weuburie in Deuon.

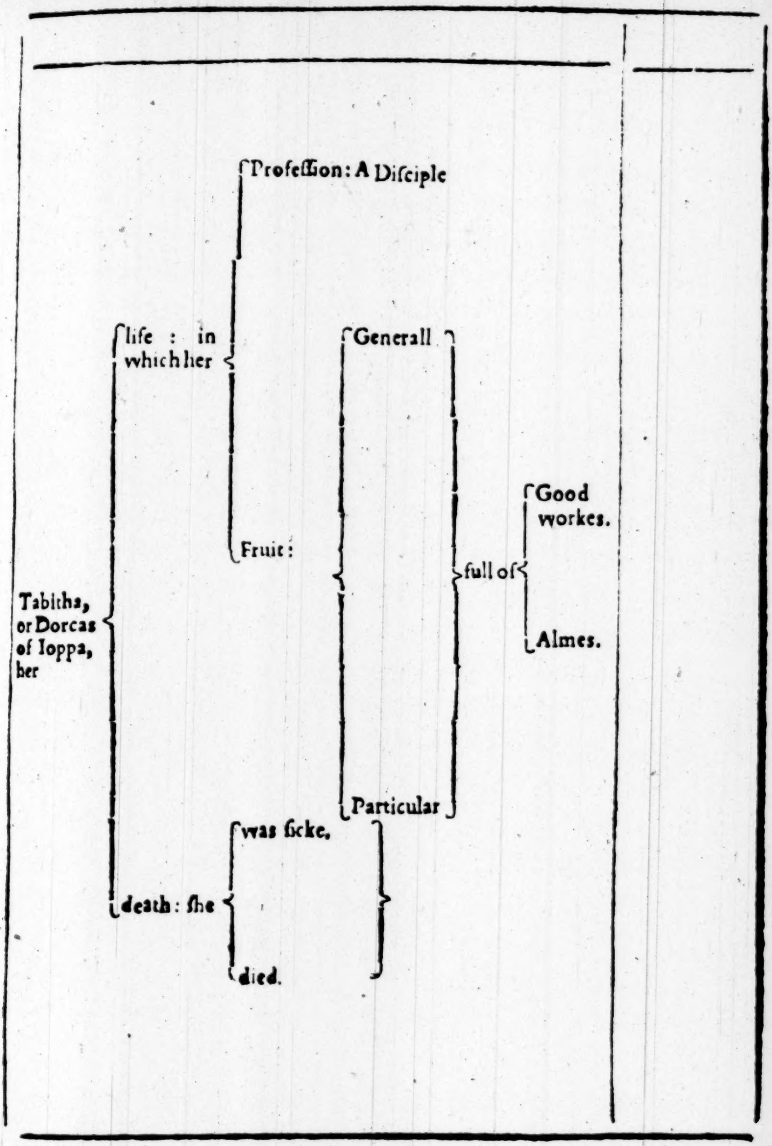
Madame, many things, which I haue obſerued in you, do euen aſſure me, that this ſmall preſent ſhall finde ſome fauour with you: theſe two eſpecially; your reuerent eſtimation of the ordinance of God (the word preached) and your more particular reſpect vnto my miniſtrie: Other things I could name, but that I do abhorre the very ſmell and ſhadow of flatterie. It hath pleaſed you ſometime, to craue of me the notes of ſome things which I haue (in your hearing) taught in publique: Being much deſired by many to commit to printing, that which God enabled mee very lately to deliuer, at the funerals of a worthy gentle-woman of theſe parts, I thought to inſcribe it vnto your Ladie-ſhips name, as a pledge of my true deſire to further you (all I may) in your iourney towards Heauen. The matter is, of a woman, in the Scripture well reported of, both for her holy profeſſion, and for her

gracious fruit, to whom the more like your Ladie-ſhip ſhall become, the better ſhall your aſſurance be of entring into reſt: I commend the Sermon to your reading, the perſon treated of to your Imitation, and your bodie and ſoule to the protection of the Almightie, my ſelfe remaining

Your Ladie-ſhips ready ſeruitor

in any Chriſtian office

SAM. HIERON.


Tabitha, or Dorcas of Ioppa, her
life : in which her
Profession: A Disciple
Fruit:
Generall
full of
Good workes.
Almes.
Particular
death: she
was sicke.
died.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF DORCAS.

ACTS 9. 36. *There was also at Ioppa a certaine woman, a Disciple named Tabitha, (which by interpretation is called Dorcas) shee was full of good workes and almes which shee did.*

37. *And it came to passe in those daies, that shee was sicke and died.*

THis which I haue read is the entrance into a very memorable storie, touching a testimonie which God gaue to the word of his grace, by enabling *Peter* to restore a dead woman vnto life. I am now to treat of it, as an entire parcell in it selfe, and being so considered, I may terme it, A compendious or briefe report of the life and death of a certaine worthy Matron, whose dwelling was in *Ioppa*, whose name, in the Syriacke tongue, *Tabitha*, as much in effect as that which in Greeke is called *Dorcas*: a name very honourable now because it was hers, though in it owne natiue signification not so gracefull, it being as much to say as in English, *Roe*, or *Goat*: no more preiudice to her who was a sheepe of Christs, then it was behouefull to traiterous *Absalom* that by the purport of his name he was the father of peace. I will not spend

The generall state of the place.

time about these circumstances of her name and dwelling, though both might afoord vs good matter of instruction: the one, to shew how that (as God said to *Moses*) [a] the religious finde that fauour in the sight of God, that he knoweth them by name, and that, although it bee their portion heere to haue their *names put out as euill* [b], yet shall they are *written in heauen* [c], *in the Booke of life of the Lambe* [d], out of which *they shall neuer bee razed* [e], whereas the wicked though they thinke *to get them a name* [f], and lay plots *to keepe their name in remembrance* [g], and to that end doe *call their Lands by their names* [h], yet their *name shall rot* [i], and shall *bee left by them as a curse vnto Gods chosen* [k]: the other, of her dwelling might bee brought to minde vs, that the Lord *knoweth our dwelling* [l], and so by consequence is *accustomed to all our waies* [m]. If we walke in obedience before him, no place can hinder our acceptance with him: his eie is as well to *Ioppa* as to *Ierusalem*: and if wee *walke stubbornly against him* [n], no place can shroud vs from his hand. For, *Whither shall wee flee from his presence?* [o] And, *The eie of the Lord in euery place shall behold the euill and the good* [p]. Those things I could vrge from these circumstances: but because I am now like to a poore traueller, that hath farre to goe and little to spend, much matter before me in my text, but not much time before me to deliuer it in, I will therefore select such things as may sort with the purpose of our meeting, which as it is to solemnize the funerall of a deceased Matrone, so it should bee to take occasion thereby, so to *number our daies that we applie our hearts to wisedome* [q], and so to order our daies by *passing the time of our dwelling heere in feare* [r], that (which is the reward of godlinesse) God may *doe vs good in our latter end* [s]. I come therefore to those two generall points, the *Life*, and *Death* of *Dorcas*, the one, vers. 36. the other, vers. 37. Touching her life, there are two things considerable: 1. Her profession (*a*

The diuision of the place into 2. parts.

[a] Exo. 33 17.
[b] Luk. 6 22.
[c] Luk. 10 20.
[d] Deu. 13 8.
[e] Reu 3.5.
[f] Gen. 11.4.
[g] 2. Sam. 18. 18.
[h] Ps. 49 11.
[i] Pro. 10 7.
[k] Isa. 65. 15.
[l] Isa. 37. 28. Reu. 2. 13.
[m] Ps. 139. 3.
[n] Leuit. 26. 23.
[o] Ps. 139 7.
[p] Pro. 15. 3.
[q] Ps. 90. 12.
[r] 1. Pet. 1 17.
[s] Deu. 8. 16.

Iosicle)

Disciple) : 2. The fruits of her profession (*full of good workes &c.*) : two things which ought to kisse each other in the life of a Christian. A profession without fruit, is grosse hypocrisie ? A kind of fruit (for so there may be) without a right profession, is boote-lesse formalitie : but both together, knowledge to guide obedience, and obedience to testifie the truth of the knowledge, that is Christianity. In whom I can finde these two of him I may say, *Behold indeed an Israelite in whom is no guile* [t] ? This is the man of *pure heart, and innocent hands*, that shall *ascend into the mountaine of the Lord* [u]. Let me speake of both a-part, I may diuide them in my discourse, but in our course, neither you nor I, may sunder them.

The things considerable in the first part.

[t] Ioh. 1. 47.

[u] Psal. 24. 3, 4.

1. Her profession, a *Disciple*. Disciple was the customarie name by which those that professed the truth were called in the prime daies of the Gospell. In the beginning it was a title more peculiar to those that giue their ordinarie attendance vpon our Sauiour: The twelue Apostles are called the *twelue Disciples* [x] ; but yet euen then, the name was enlarged, his ordinarie hearers are called his *Disciples* [y] and *Ioseph* of Arimathea, is said to haue beene a *Disciple* [z]. After Christs ascension, as the number of beleeuers was enlarged, so the name grew more common: as in this very chapter, the true professors whom *Saul* did persecute, are called *the Disciples of the Lord* [a], *Ananias* is termed a *Disciple* [b], and those which were after at *Antioch*, called *Christians* (where that name was first taken vp,) were before that time called *Disciples* [c]. A *Disciple* is as much to say in English as a learner, and the beleeuers were so stiled because they were such, as in a desire of hauing knowledge had their dependance vpon the ordinarie meanes of instruction, (the preaching of the word.) So then, *Dorcas* a *Disciple*, that is *Dorcas* a scholer in the schoole of Christ, a submitter of her selfe to the ordinance of God for the saiuing of her soule. Shee was none of those *Learners* whom the Apostle blameth, which

The first thing in the 1 part.

[x] Mat. 10. 1.

[y] Ioh. 6. 66.

[z] Ioh. 19. 38.

[a] Ver. 1.

[b] Ver. 10.

[c] Act. 11. 26.

learne to go about from house to house &c. [d] but such a *Learner* as *Lydia*, which *attended to those things which were spoken of Paul* [e]. Her being a *Learner*, is (as other Scripture) *written for our learning* [f], and the Doctrine which it affordeth to vs, is this. *That, to be a learner of religion by the meanes ordained of God, to teach religion is a part of the very essence and Being of a Christian.* These two words a *Disciple*, and a *Christian*, are as wee are wont to say in schooles, termes conuertible, as thus; *If a Disciple, surely a Christian: If a Christian, surely a Disciple: If no Disciple, no Christian: If no Christian, no Disciple.* I know there be also many counterfet Disciples, and so there be also many counterfet Christians, and many seeme to be Disciples, which yet are no Christians, and many also take vpon them to be Christians, which by no meanes will be Disciples: yet stil doth that which I haue said remaine true, that, such as is a mans *Disciple-ship*, such is his *Christianitie*: If a true *Disciple*, a true *Christian*, if but a formall *Disciple*, surely but an hollow *Christian*. I will appeale to any mans iudgement, be it that he be but (as it were) a man of *yesterday* [g] in Religion, to tell mo, what other thing is ment, by this, that *Dorcas* was a *Disciple*, then this *Dorcas was a beliewer; a woman conuerted by the Gospell, to the Christian Faith?* So that this obseruation is iust from hence, *Esther a Disciple, or else, no Christian.* To this for a fuller confirmation we may ioine that speach of Christs to the Apostles, when he sent them out to preach: *Go, and teach all nations*, or word for word from the *Greeke, go make them Disciples* [h] *If you can bring them once to this, to submit themselues to be taught of God in his owne ordinance, you haue won them.* When our Sauiour would shew what marke his sheepe haue, he declareth it to be an *Eare-marke, my sheepe heare my voice* [i], they haue the *wise and obedient eare* [k], Now a good *Hearer* and a good *Disciple* are all one. Againe, No man can be a *Christian* indeed, vnlesse he be a beleeuer: for what is a *Christian*, but a man in *Christ* [l], and how

[d] 1. Tim. 5. 13.
[e] Acts. 16. 14.
[f] Rom. 15 4. The 1. Doctrine.
[g] Iob. 8 9.
[h] Mat. 28. 19. μαθητευσατε &c.
[i] Ioh. 10. 27.
[k] Prou. 25. 12.
[l] 2. Cor. 5. 17.

how cometh that vnion betwixt a man and Christ but by *Faith* [m] ? and how shall a man haue *Faith*, but by being a *Disciple* ? *Faith is by hearing* [n], and *Hearing* is the inseperable quality of a *Disciple* : Further what *Christian* will you call him, that shall not be saued, and what Saluation is there for him, that forsaketh that olde beaten path, *Heare, and your soule shall liue* [o]. Besides, how is hee a *Christian*, that doth *not know God, and him whom he hath sent Christ Iesus* [p], and who can know so much vnlesse he be a *Disciple* ? man of himselfe doth not know it, (for, *euery man is a beast by his owne knowledge* [q], Man of himselfe cannot know it, (for it *is foolishnesse vnto him* [r] : hee must attaine to it by donation from God, or else he can neuer vnderstand it, (for *a man can receiue nothing except it bee giuen from aboue* [s] : If he must expect it from God, beggers must not chuse, and hee must fit himselfe so to receiue it, as God is pleased to bestow it, and he will not bestow it but by *the folly of preaching* [t] : a man must sit him downe in the *Disciples* forme, or hee shall neuer obtaine it. I know the world will account him but a foole who tieth himselfe to this course, but this is that *Foolishnesse of God*, which *is wiser then Men* [u] and he who seemeth to be *wise in this world*, must *be a foole, that he may be wise* [x]. This briefely, to cleere this Doctrine.

Now, for vse, if none be *Christians* but *Disciples*, and none *Disciples*, but such as haue chosen *Maries* part, to *sit at Iesus feet to heare his preaching* [y], and what *Feet* are there now left vnto vs but *those beautifull ones, which bring glad tidings of peace* [z] ? Tell mee then (I pray you) what plentie is there of *Christians* ? Sure I am, the number of *Disciples* is not great. I know, *Hearers* there bee many, but not euery *Hearer* a *Disciple*. By that t me the number of *Disciples* are shealed out from the great preasse and multitude of common *Hearers*, I will tell you how it will be. *Israel* went out to fight against *Aram* : *Israel* pit-

[m] Eph. 3. 17.
[n] Rom 10. 17.
[o] Isa. 55 3.
[p] Ioh. 17, 3.
[q] Ier. 10.14.
[r] 1.Cor. 2.14.
[s] Ioh. 3. 27.
[t] 1.Cor.1.21.
[u] 1.Cor.1.25.
[x] 1.Cor.3.18.
[y] Luk. 10.39.
[z] Rom.10.15.

ched on the one ſide, *Aram* on the other ſide: *The children of Iſrael were like two little flockes of Kids, but the Aramites filled the Countrey* [a]. Heere is the very true proportion betwixt the great ſwarmes of *Hearers*, and the ſmall handfull of *Diſciples*. There bee many things doe make men *Hearers*, as, neceſſitie, authoritie, hypocriſie, formalitie, affectation of nouelrie, &c. But there is but one thing makes a man a *Diſciple*; a ſettled perſwaſion that, that whereto a man ſubmitteth himſelfe as a *Diſciple*, is the very *Arme of the Lord* [b], and *the power of God vnto ſaluation* [c]. And if we bring *Diſciples* to this ſcantling, I beſeech you aske the men in your own coats, where wee ſhall finde them. Surely the men of this generation are not yet poſſeſſed with the neceſſitie of dependance vpon that *Teaching* courſe which the Lord hath ſanctified to the *gathering together of his Saints* [d]. The multitude paſſeth it ouer in a kinde of careleſneſſe, not ſo much as euer putting it to the queſtion, *what is to bee done that they may bee ſaued*. They follow the droue: if it bee right, ſo it is; if not, then God helpe, if ſo many ſhall bee damned. But now the wiſer ſort, they conſent and agree, that ſomewhat muſt bee knowen and beleeued vnto ſaluation: but to goe to ſchoole to a Miniſter, to *giue attendance at the poſts of the Lords doores*, there to *heare inſtruction* [e], that is too ſubmiſſe a courſe: *Why? cannot wee informe our ſelues?* And, *Is there no Chriſtianity, but by ſo ſeruile a conformitie as the hanging vpon the mouth of a Preacher?* No (beloued) either ſhew thy ſelfe a *Diſciple*, or neuer thinke thou art a *Chriſtian*. They which were firſt called *Chriſtians*, were *Diſciples* firſt. Neither is euery one a *Diſciple*, which putteth his foot into the Schoole. Hee that commeth with a denial of himſelfe, with an heart hungring after knowledge, with the ſpirit of meekeneſſe, with ſubmiſſion to the ordinance of him who is the onely Doctour of his Church, this is the *Diſciple*, hee is the *Chriſtian* indeede; this is hee whom *the Lord*

a 1. King. 20. 27.

b Iſa. 53. 1.

c Rom. 1. 16

d Eph. 4. 12

e Pro. 8. 33.

Lord will guide in iudgement, and to whom hee will *teach his way* [f]. And thus for the first flower which I haue plucked from that garland, with which it hath pleased the spirit of God to adorne this Matrones name (*Dorcas* a *Disciple.*) And albeit the world neglects both this title, and the thing intended by it as vnworthy, yet without it wee lay all our honour in the dust. This title must bee a mans glory to the end, as was said of him, *Mnason an old Disciple* [g]. *As I grow old, so I learne still*, said a wise Heathen. A man must neuer thinke to be preferred out of this Schoole, vntill hee come to bee admitted into that great Vniuersitie, where hee which is the *Doctour of the Chaire*, Christ Iesus, will aduance all those that haue beene good Proficients in the learners Forme, to *sit with him vpon his owne Throne* [h]. So much for her profession.

[f] Psal. 25. 9.

[g] Act. 21. 16.

[h] Reu. 3. 21.

Now follow the fruits of her profession: of which the Holy Ghost speaketh first generally (*full of good workes*) and then some particular good workes are made mention of, (*Almes, &c.*) I will treat of both seuerally: and first of this (*full of good workes.*) My order must bee thus: First, to shew the meaning: Secondly, to set downe the doctrine. In the meaning, first, what those things are which are called *Good workes*: secondly, what it is to bee *full of good workes*.

The 2. thing in the 1. part.

Good workes are of the same wideneſſe with Gods commandements. For obedience to any branch of Gods commandements, is a *good worke*. Papists (and from them others) doe straiten the largenesse of *good workes*, of which notwithstanding they take vpon them to bee the chiefest Patrones. They goe not much further, then to *Almes-deeds*, and *Fasting*, and such like. The rule of *good workes* is Gods reuealed will [i]: voluntarie seruices God esteemeth not [k]: the *Feare taught by the precepts of men*, he accounts it but hypocrisie [l]. The particular heads of *good workes* are set downe, *Tit.* 2. 12. 1. *Sobrietie* (in the vse

What be good works.

[i] Mich. 6. 8.

[k] Col. 2. 23.

[l] Isai. 29. 13.

vse of outward things, meat, drinke, wealth, apparell, disports.) 2. *Righteousnesse* (in dealings with men, that there be *no oppressing, no defrauding*) [m]. 3. *Godlinesse* (in matters belonging to God, that wee worship the true God, after a true manner, with a true heart.) The credit and triall of *good workes* standeth in these particular: 1. When they are guided by *Knowledge* [n]: (blinde zeale is with God of no esteeme.) 2. When they are directed to Gods *Glorie* [o]: (to doe things to be seene of men is Pharisaicall.) 3. When they are carried with a ioint respect to all *Gods commandements* [p]: (to be precise in some things, and in other to take libertie, is grosse hypocrisie) 4. When there is a care chiefly had to those good offices which concerne a mans personall calling [q]: (hee that is not good in a calling, is not good at all.) 5. When they are held out with constancie [r]: (good is not good, if it bee not perpetuall.) This is in few words the true state of *good Workes*.

1. Thes. 1. 6.

[n] Rom 10. 2.

[o] 1. Cor 10. 31.

[p] Psal. 119. 6.

[q] Luk 3 12. &c.

[r] Reu 2.10.

What to be full of good workes.

Now to be *Full*, hath reference first to the sincerities of her heart, without which, bee the shew to the world-ward neuer so glorious, yet a man is but an emptie Christian. 2. to the vniuersalitie of her practise, who like *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, *walked in all the Commandements of God* [s]. 3. To the forwardnesse of her disposition, she was *ready to good workes* [t]. 4. To the vnwearinednesse of her course, she was like *Thyatira*, her *workes moe at the last then at the first* [u]. This is the fulnesse of a *Christian*, without fraud, without halting, without grudging, and without tiring. Thus for the meaning. This her *Fulnesse* affoords fulnesse of matter. But I am forced at this time, in stead of a bill of particulars, which in this case would be very comfortable, to present all in one grosse summe, thus, That euery *Disciple* of *Christ* must *accompanie his holy profession with good workes*. The spirit of God acquainteth vs here what *Dorcas* was, that from thence wee might learne what we must be. *Fulnesse of good workes*, was not in her a

[s] Luk 1 6.

[t] Tit 3 1.

[u] Reu. 2 19.

The 2. Doctrine.

matter

matter of supererogation but of duty. If it were duty in her, it is necessitie in vs. The Scripture abounds in proofe. It was the common charge giuen by *Iohn Baptist* to his hearers, when they began to make a good profession, *Bring forth therefore fruit &c.* [x]. The like elsewhere, *Let your conuersation be such as becommeth the Gospell of Christ* [y], *Walke worthy the calling whereunto you are called* [z]. It is that which *Paul* preached to the Gentiles [a], and hee commanded it to be pressed by preachers vpon all professors [b]. This was he suter for to God on their behalfe with whom he laboured [c]. Your conuerts and professors of the new Testament of speciall note, their *Good woorkes* are specified; as *Mathew*: his generall woorke is mentioned, *hee followed Christ* [d]: his particulars, as of *Bounty* (*he made Iesus a feast* [e],) and of *Charity*, he inuited his fellow *Publicanes* to bee guests, that they also might be saued. *Zacheus*, *Behold Lord, the halfe of my goods &c.* [f], There were his workes. The three thousand brought to be *Disciples* by *Peters* Ministrie, *They continued in the Apostles Doctrine, and fellowship &c.* [g], These were there workes. *Cornelius, his praiers and almes came vp into remembrance with God* [h], Such were his workes. The beleeuers at Ephesus came and confessed and *shewed their workes* [i]. *Paul* commended the Romanes for their *Holinesse* [k], the *Corinthians*, for their zeale [l], the *Thessalonians* for their *diligent loue &c.* [m]: Behold a cloud of *witnesses*: *whatsoeuer things are honest, and of good report &c. those do* [n], If these things were memorable in others, surely they are imitable in vs. Why *Good workes* ought to be coupled with our good profession, there bee (as saith the Apostle) certaine *necessary vses* [o], as namely, First, the *Glory of God* [p], It is an honour to God, when his seruants by profession are as zealous of good workes, as god-lesse people are in wickednesse. Secondly, the conuersion of others. [q]. It is possible that they which respect not the

[x] Mat.3.8.
[y] Phil.1.27.
[z] Eph.4.1.
[a] Act.26.20.
[b] Tit.3.8.
[c] Col.1.9.10.
[d] Math.9.9.
[e] 10.
[f] Luk.19.8.
[g] Act.2.45. 46.47.
[h] Act.10.4.
[i] Act.10 18.
[k] Rom.6.22.
[l] 2 Cor.7.11
[m] 1.Th.1.3. &c.
[n] Phil.4.8.
[o] Tit.3.14.
[p] Math.5.16. Ioh.15.8.
[q] 1.Pet 2.12.

word, may *without the Word bee wonne by the pure conuerſation of beleeuers* [r]. Thirdly, the ſtopping of the mouthes of gainſayers [s]. The credit of the Goſpell muſt be deare vnto vs, and woe to him which maketh *that worthy name by which he is named to be blaſphemed* [t]. Fourthly, the declaration of the Truth of our *Faith* [u]. It is no liuing but a titular *Faith*, which doth not *worke by Loue* [x]. Fifthly, aſſurance of our owne Election to our ſoules [y]. Good workes are the *Way*, which *God hath ordained vs to walke in* [z]. Thus you ſee the truth of this aſſertion: A true *Diſciple* muſt not be like the *Tree* which Chriſt curſed, which had leaues but no fruit [a], but like the *Tree planted by the riuers ſide, that will bring foorth her fruit in due ſeaſon* [b], nay, which *bringeth forth her fruite in the age thereof, and is then fat and flowriſhing* [c].

This is an excellent doctrine and a neceſſarie, and if I were as *eloquent and mightie in the Scriptures*, as *Apollos* [d], as *full of the holie Ghoſt*, as *Barnabas* [e], as *abounding in Faith and power*, as *Steuen* [f], or had the beſt gift in perſwading, that God hath giuen vnto any, I might well imploy it, in the furthering and promoting of this one point: that we would make conſcience to be *iustfull in good workes* [g]. It is an exhortation which many amongſt vs do much need. For albeit the profeſſion of the Goſpell in this kingdome hath not been vnfruitfull, ſo that, for publique euidences of charitie, and monuments of zeale to pietie and learning, we need not feare to conteſt with the greateſt oppoſites to our Religion, * beſides the blameleſſe and honeſt conuerſation of many priuate Chriſtians, whoſe liues no doubt, *do adorne the doctrine of God our Sauiour* [h], which they profeſſe: Yet put caſe we heer for our parts, who as the Iewes of old, *gloried in God* [i], ſo do alſo boaſt in our profeſsion, and in the ſtile and name of Chriſtianitie, put caſe we (I ſay) be dealt with in particular, may we not iuſtly be challenged for our ſcarcitie of good workes, what better deeds haue many of vs, *then the crying ſinnes of Sodome* [k],

r 1.Pet.3.1.
s Tit.2.8.
t Iam.2.7.
u Iam.2.18.
x Gal.5.6.
y Eph.2.10.
z Math.21.19
a Pſ.1.3.
b Pſal.92.13. The vſe.
c Act.18.24.
d Act.11.24.
e Act.6.8.
f Col.1.10.
g See to this end Willet in his Synopſis pag.960.&c.
h Tit.2.10.
i Rom.2.17.
k Gen.18.20.

dome [k], *then the vnfruitfull workes of Darkeneſſe* [l], contempt of Gods ſacred word and worſhip, blaſpheming of his *glorious and fearefull name* [m], prophanation of his holy-day, whoredome, pride, malice, drunkenneſſe, oppreſſion, ſacrilege, and ſuch like. Whom would it not grieue that hath in him the affections of a Chriſtian, that nothing ſhould be in ſo generall a diſgrace as this one thing, *to be zealous of good workes*, and that *the working out of our ſaluation with feare and trembling* [n], which is euen the pith and marrow of all *good workes*, ſhould be a matter by prophane mouthes ſo much ſpoken againſt. I beſeech you, let vs ſuffer the words of exhortation, and let vs be euen emulous of that praiſe which is heer giuen vnto *Dorcas, to be full of good workes.* What an happie, and royall exchange were it, if the fulneſſe of theſe times, fulneſſe of ſecuritie, *Fulneſſe of bread* [o], might be turned into *Fulneſſe of good workes.* This would be our comfort in death, this would giue vs boldneſſe in the day of iudgement. Death is the worlds ſtrict doore-keeper, and will ſee that as *we brought nothing into the World*, ſo *we carrie nothing out* [p], but yet the concomitance of *good Workes* it cannot hinder, *Bleſſed are they that die in the Lord, their workes follow them* [q]: and for the day of Iudgement, our triall there, ſhall not be by our profeſſion, but by *our Workes*, and euery man ſhall be remembred there according to his goodneſſe heere. Thinke not I preach *Good-Worke*, like a Iuſticiarie. I confeſſe when we haue done all we muſt ſay, *we are vnprofitable ſeruants* [r], and acknowledge with that ancient Father, that vnleſſe God did ſpare in mercie, he ſhould find none whom he might crowne in iuſtice. It is ſaid of *Manlius Torquatus*, that when his ſonne contrarie to a martiall decree, had exceeden his courſe, and ſlaine an enemie, his father, being the commander of the ſeruice, firſt crowned him for his valour, and then executed him for his diſobedience. So may God deale with vs, were it that he ſhould find any thing in vs wor-

[k] Eph. 5 11.

[l] Deu 28.58

[m] Phil. 2. 12.

[n] Ezek. 16 49

[o] 1. Tim. 6. 7.

[p] Reu. 14 13.

[q] Luk. 17. 50. *Niſi Deus ſer miſericordiam parceret, non haberet. quos per iuſtitiam coronaret. Auguſt. in Pſ.* 100.

worthy to bee rewarded, hee ſhould withall finde more then ſomething deſeruing to be puniſhed. Now though I thus diſclaime the merit of *Good Workes*, and crie with him that ſaid, *My merit is the Lords mercie*; yet I maintaine the neceſſitie of *Good Workes*. For them, no man ſhall be ſaued: but without them, there is no entring into reſt. *Follow holineſſe, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord* [a]. The way to heauen is an *holy way*, and *the polluted ſhall not paſſe by it* [b]. Let vs therfore *caſt away our tranſgreſſions* [b], *mortifie our members, that are on earth* [c], *crucifie our fleſh, with the affections and luſts* [d], *make our waies and our workes good* [e], if wee deſire in our life to be honoured, in our death to be comforted, and at the laſt reſurrection to bee crowned. So much touching the generall fruit of *Dorcas* profeſſion.

Mariam wo-man miſeratio Domini. Bernard.

[a] Heb. 12. 14.
[b] Iſa. 35. 8.
[b] Ezek. 18. 31
[c] Col. 3. 5.
[d] Gal. 5. 24.
[e] Ier. 18. 11.

What Almes is.

One particular of her *Good workes*, was *Almes*. Before wee come to doctrine, wee muſt conſider ſomething of the nature of *Almes*. In the generall nature, *Almes* is a giuing vnto thoſe that want; but yet not euery giuing, no not where there is neede, is *Almes*, vnleſſe it bee a *Giuing* ſo conditioned as the word of God preſcribes. The *Giuing* which the Scripture warrants, to the end it may bee called an *Almes*, muſt thus bee qualified: Firſt, It muſt bee with diſcretion. *A good man is mercifull, &c. and will meaſure his affaires by iudgement* [f]. Many a good duty is marred in the handling. Diſcretion reſpecteth either the quantitie which is giuen, or the parties to whom: For the quantitie, a due reſpect muſt be had to a mans owne *abilitie* [g]. The Heathen fitly compareth giuing of *Almes*, or any the like communicating office, vnto the reaching foorth of ones candle, that by it another may light his, wherein care muſt bee had, that a mans owne goe not out. *Charitie is bountifull* [h], but not prodigall: although caſes alſo may bee in which this proportion muſt be exceeded: according as the Churches of *Macedonia, were willing beyond their power* [i]. But this cloſe-handed age gi-

[f] Pſal. 112. 5
[g] Act. 11. 29.

Nihil omnino vi-ſi luceat.

[h] 1. Cor. 13. 4.
[i] 2. Cor. 8. 3.

ueth

ueth no great cauſe to preſſe this rule, yet it muſt not bee omitted. Another branch of diſcretion is concerning the parties to whom. For this *Giuing* to all without diſtinction, is not *Almes*. *Bleſſed is the man that iudgeth wiſely of the poore* [k]. There is a generation to which a man ought not to giue, vnleſſe in a caſe of manifeſt extremitie: *Hee that workes not, ſhould not eat* [l]. The principall and firſt reſpect muſt bee to the *Houſhold of Faith* [m], and that *the bowels of the poore Saints may bee comforted* [n]. To ſuch, a man muſt giue both more affectionately, and more liberally. The honeſt poore, the induſtrious poore, thoſe that fall into pouertie, not thoſe that make a profeſſion of beggerie. This is diſcretion. Secondly, it muſt bee with Iuſtice. The word which in *Matthew 6. verſe 1.* is tranſlated *Almes*, ſignifieth Iuſtice, becauſe it is not indeede *Charitie*, if it doe not proceede from *Equitie*. Now I call that *Iuſtice* in giuing, when a man *giueth of his owne. Caſt thy bread, &c.* [x]. *I the Lord loue iudgement: but I hate robberie for burnt offering* [y]: as when men ſuppoſe to make a kinde of ſatisfaction for a great deale of vniuſt getting, by ſome largeſſe to the poore. Thirdly, it muſt bee with compaſſion: *(as if yee were alſo afflicted, &c.* [z]). This is that which is called *Tender-heartedneſſe* [a], and, *a pouring out of the ſoule to the hungrie* [b]. Fourthly, It muſt bee with cheerefulneſſe. *God loueth a cheerefull giuer* [c]. Well-doing muſt proceed from well-willing: Such as is the affection, ſuch is the action. Fiftly, It muſt be with ſimplicitie [d]. It is done in ſimplicitie, when the approouing of our ſelues vnto God is the principall ſcope. *Almes* muſt be giuen, not put out to vſe. The moſt of that which I haue now ſaid touching this *Giuing Charitie*, is comprehended in a certaine deuice or repreſentatiue picture which I read of, of late, * wherein *Charitie* is pourtraied in the likeneſſe of a naked childe, with a meerie countenance, couered in a cloud, with a bloudie heart in the hand, giuing hony to a Bee

[k] Pſal. 41. 1.
[l] 2. Theſ. 3. 10.
[m] Gal. 6. 10.
[n] Philem. 7. *Maiori & affectu & effectu. Bernard.*
See Beza vpon that place.
[x] Eccl. 11. 1.
[y] Iſa. 61. 8.
[z] 2. Heb. 13. 3.
[a] Eph. 4. 32.
[b] Iſa. 58. 10.
[c] 2. Cor. 9. 7. *Beneficentia ex benevolentia manare debet. Affectus tuus rerum imponit operibus. Amb. offic. lib. 1. c. 30.*
[d] Rom. 12. 8. *Dando beneficium non ſperando. Lactant.*
* In the Sermon of R. M. vpon Gen. 18. 32.

without wings. Firſt, a childe, becauſe the charitable
[d] Math. 18.4. muſt bee humble as a *Childe* [d]. Secondly, naked, *Cha-*
[e] 1. Cor. 13.5. *ritie ſeeketh not her owne* [e]. Thirdly, looking merrily:
[f] Verſ. 6. *Charitie reioiceth in the truth* [f]. Fourthly, couered with
a cloud. *Charitie* hunteth not for applauſe. *The right*
[g] Math 6 3. *hand muſt not know what the left hand doth* [g]. Fifthly, A
heart in the hand: *Charitie* is no diſſembler; the heart
and hand doe agree. Sixthly, It giueth hony to a Bee
without wings. It helpeth not the droane, but the Bee;
not the ideler, but the labourer, whom God hath diſabled
to bee his owne ſupplie. So then this is the effect of
all touching *Dorcas*. Shee was zealous of *Good Workes*
generally; more particularly, ſhee was a diſcreet, iuſt,
compaſſionate, cheerefull, ſimple-hearted Almoner.
Whatſoeuer ſhee did, ſhee did as a *Diſciple*, according
to the preſcript of that holy doctrine, wherein ſhee was
trained. Other manner of *Giuing* then this, the word of
God could neuer teach her.

The 3. Doctrine.

Now come wee to the doctrine, which is thus: *That, giuing to the poore is a ſpeciall practiſe of true Chriſtianitie, which wee may not neglect.* Wherefore are wee told of *Dorcas Almes*, but to binde vs to the like vertue? It is a matter which the Scripture laboureth to faſten to vs with a three-fold cord. Firſt, Precept: Secondly, Example? Thirdly, Benefit. The firſt, to enioine vs: the ſecond, to direct vs: the third, to encourage vs. Firſt for Precept: *Caſt thy bread vpon the waters, Giue a portion to*
[i] Eccl. 11.1.2. *ſeuen, and alſo to eight* [i]. *Is not this the faſt, that I haue*
[k] Iſa. 58.7. *choſen, to deale thy bread to the hungrie? &c.* [k]. *If one of*
thy brethren with thee bee poore, &c. thou ſhalt not harden
thy heart, nor ſhut thy hand from thy poore brother: but
[l] Deu. 15.7.8. *thou ſhalt open thine hand vnto him, &c.* [l]. *Giue to him*
[m] Mat. 5.4.2. *that asketh, &c.* [m]. *Hee that hath two coats, let him giue*
to him that hath none; and hee that hath meat, let him doe
[n] Luk. 3.11. *likewiſe* [n]. *As yee abound in euery thing, in Faith, in word,*
[o] 2. Cor. 8.7. *&c. ſo ſee that you abound in this grace alſo* [o]. *Bee rea-*

die

de to distribute [p]. Thus for precept. As for examples, wee haue the Hospitalitie of *Abraham* [q], and *Lot* [r], the charitie of *Obadiah*, that kept an hundred Prophets vpon his owne charge in the time of persecution vnder *Iezabel* [s], the bountie of *Iob*, *I was eies to the blind, feet to the lame* [t]: *I haue not eat my morsels alone, &c. I haue seene none perish for want of clothing: the loines of the poore haue blessed mee, because hee was warmed with the fleece of my sheepe* [u]. The liberalitie of *Zacheus*: *The halfe of my goods I giue to the poore* [x]. The free-heartednesse of *Cornelius*: *Hee gaue much Almes* [y]. The compassionatenesse of *Philemon*: *By thee brother the bowels of the Saints are comforted* [z]. The forwardnesse of *Paul*: *Which thing* (speaking of remembring the poore) *I was diligent to doe* [a]. Aboue all, wee haue the example of examples, the practise of Christ Iesus. Generally this is noted of him, that *being rich, for our sakes hee became poore, that wee through his pouertie might bee made rich* [b]. Particularlie, though hee himselfe liued by contribution, yet hee gaue out a share to the poore [c]. Heere are examples. Now for benefit and good that followeth heerein: First, wee are assured, that whatsoeuer flesh and bloud may imagine, yet that which is giuen is not lost: *After many daies thou shalt finde it* [d]. *Hee that hath mercy vpon the poore, lendeth to the Lord, and the Lord will recompence, &c.* [e]. *The liberall person shall haue plentie, &c.* [f]. *Hee that soweth liberally, shall reape liberally* [g]. So that heere is one good turne, a man is sure this way to bee no looser, rather hee prouides a stocke for himselfe against the time of neede. Secondly, heereby a man brings vpon himselfe a continuall blessing thorowout his whole life. *The Lord shall deliuer him in the time of trouble: the Lord will keepe him, and preserue him aliue, hee shall bee blessed vpon earth, &c.* [h]. Hee bringeth a blessing also vpon his posteritie. *His seede enioyeth the blessing* [i]. Thirdly, this is a meanes to bring vs to the right vse of our wealth.

[p] 1. Tim. 6. 11
[q] Gen. 18. 1.
[r] Gen. 19. 1.
[s] 1. Kin. 11. 4
[t] Iob. 29. 15 16.
[u] Iob 31. 17. &c.
[x] Luk. 19 8.
[y] Act. 10. 2.
[z] Philem. 7.
[a] Gal. 2. 10.
[b] 2. Cor. 8 9.
[c] Ioh. 13. 29.
[d] Eccle. 11. 1.
[e] Pro 19. 17.
[f] Pro. 11. 25.
[g] 2. Cor. 9. 6.
[h] Psal 41 1 2. &c.
[i] Psal. 37. 26.

Giue

[k] Luk. 11.41. *Giue almes and behold all shall bee cleane vnto you* [k]. It is like the aduise of a Physitian to helpe a surfet by forbearance, so (saith Christ) you that haue beene giuen to oppression and cruelty, if you shall repent heereof and make knowne the truth of your repentance by the fruites of Charitie, this will bee a good medicine against greedinesse, and a meanes to bring you to the pure vse of Gods blessings. Fourthly, it is a good pledge to a mans soule of his future inheritance. [l] 1.Tim.6.19. *Paul* calleth it a *good foundation against the time to come* [l]: not that our Saluation is built vpon *Almes*, but the bowels of compassion in vs towards others, is (as it were) a print or stamp of the mercy of God set vpon our hearts. Thus wee see how *Almes giuing* is recommended to vs in the Scripture. I could adde the penaltie annexed to the contrarie. *Hee that stoppeth his eare, at the crie of the poore, hee shall likewise crie, and not bee heard* [m]: *Iudgement mercilesse to him that sheweth no Iudgement* [n]. The vse and exhortation followeth.

[m] Pro.21.13.

[n] Iam.2.13.

The Vse. Be pleased I pray you to giue entertainement to this point also. It deserueth to bee harboured. It is the glorie of a *Christian*, *Hee hath distributed and giuen to the poore, his horne shall bee exalted with honour* [o]. As it deserueth harbour, so wee doe generally neede to be perswaded to open our doores to so worthy a guest. Fruites of mercy in these daies are exceeding scarce: The contrarie euils, oppression, violence, gaping ouer the heads of the Poore, deuouring widowes houses, selling the poore for olde shooes, rackings, enhauncings, gripings, vsuries, immoderate takings: these things, *depart not from our streetes* [p]. The portion of the poore is spent away in gaming, in reuelling, in contending, in gay cloathing, in smoke, in dogges, in drinking &c. How much is vented away by such meanes, by which many a poore soule might bee comforted,

[o] Psal.112.9.

[p] Psal.55.11.

many

many a priſoner ranſomed, many a decaied labourer, and induſtrious husbandman reſtored, many a painfull Student in the Vniuerſitie maintained, many an impouerished and ſpoiled Church re-endowed, many an Hoſpitall for the ſicke and aged erected, many an houſe of correction for the ſturdie and incorrigible, builded. I am euen aſhamed for our vnfruitfulneſſe: but, eſpecially I cannot but pitie that pitifull account, which men will make, when they ſhall come at the day of the great Audite, to giue in their billes of expenſe to the Lord Paramount, to whom for theſe things we muſt bee countable. Alas, alas, how ſhall men looke the Lord in the face, when there ſhall bee ſeene ſuch large ſummes, about vanities, about contentions at Law, about buildings, about belly-cheere, about the furtherance of wicked pleaſures, nay (perhaps) ſo much to the maintenance of ſecret whoredomes, ſo much to the commuting of puniſhments, ſo much to the keeping and ſhifting of vnlawfull iſſues, and ſo little, ſo nothing, to holy vſes, to the Church of Chriſt, and to the Saints of Chriſt. Thinke vpon it, I intreat you, and propound this vertuous woman for an example: and as in other particulars, ſo remember to follow her in this: That which you will doe in this kinde, put it not off vntill your latter end. Theſe her *Almes*, were fruits of her life courſe, not of her Legacies at her death. *While wee haue time, let vs doe good, &c.* [q]. I condemne not funerall beneficence ſimply: onely I preferre the vitall before it. They which doe nothing but by way of a teſtamentarie benevolence, are rightlie ſaid to bee men of good willes, but of euill deedes. Thus farre of the life of *Dorcas*. Now of her death, verſe 37. *It came to paſſe, in thoſe daies, that ſhe was ſicke, and died.*

[q] Gal.6.10.

The ſecond part.

I cannot ſpeake at large of euery thing. I muſt ſtill (as hitherto) ſelect the principall; and that in this part

The fourth Doctrine.

is this: *That euen the holiest and most religious among the sonnes of men are subiect vnto death.* *Dorcas*, notwithstanding shee was a *Disciple*, notwithstanding shee was zealous of *Good Workes*, and full of *Almes-deedes*, yet heere in those daies shee sickened and was dead. This may easily bee instanced by a World of examples. Righteous *Noah*, faithfull *Abraham*, zealous *Lot*, meeke *Moses*, religious *Dauid*, innocent *Iob*, painfull *Paul*, penitent *Zache*, charitable *Cornelius*, all the worthies of the first times, and whomsoeuer else the word of God hath well reported of, where are they? Are they not all dead? Doe they not all see corruption? Are they not all gone downe into the slimie Valley? Haue they not long since made their bed in the darke? None of them all was able to deliuer his life from the power of the graue. How is it then true (will some say) that Christ hath destroied death, sith death hath still power ouer Gods Saints? I answer: Christ did not die to take away death (as yet) but to change death: not to ouerthrow the being of death, but to plucke out *the sting of Death* [r]: not quite to stop vp the graue, but to remooue and quell the victorie of the graue. The holiest therefore doe still die, but death cannot sting them, the graue cannot triumph ouer them. Death in it selfe is the way to Hell: It is altered to the children of grace, and become a Portall by which the soule passeth from out of the bodie into Heauen. Death in it selfe is as a Sergeant to arrest, and to bring to iudgement: but to the elect of God, it is as the Angell which guided *Peter* [s], and leadeth them from the vale of Teares into the land of Righteousnesse. Thus the Holy die, but not to damnation, for to them which are in Christ, *there is no damnation* [t]. It is a piece of their happinesse that they die: *Except the wheat corne fall into the ground, and die, it bideth alone* [u], and, *oh foole, that which thou sowest is not quickned except it die* [x].

[r] 1.Cor.15 55

[s] Act 12.

[t] Rom.8.

[u] Ioh. 12. 24.

die [a]. A foole or a childe seeing a goodly cluster of grapes, thinketh it pity to put them into the presse, and to deface them, but hee that is wise knoweth that by this meanes, the liquor in them is preserued, and that this timely gathering is a meanes of keeping from corruption: So wee thinke sometime, *Oh, it is pity such an one should die so soone*; as one might haue said of *Dorcas, alas so good a woman, so pitifull a creature can ill bee spared:* But God in his wisedome knoweth it to bee good, and if hee cut of the life of good *Iosiah*, as it were in the middle of the stemme, doubtlesse it is, that *his eyes may not see the euill to come* [y].

[a] 1.Cor.15.35

[y] 2. King.22. 20.

The speciall vse I will driue this point vnto, is to vrge vpon vs all a due meditation of our end. For surely if euen the holiest die, then all must die. If death seaze *euen vpon the house of God, where shall the vngodly and sinners appeare?* [z]. If *Dorcas* doe die, surely *Iezabel* shall not escape: If the tender hearted women that wept for Christ, then the stonie-hearted men, that scoffed at Christ; if those that embalmed him, then those that buffeted him: if shee that poured ointment on his head, then hee that spate in his face: there is no auoidance: It *is appointed vnto Men that they shall once die* [a]. It is heauens decree, and it cannot bee reuoked. And what is that to die? to be no more? No; happie then were *Cain*, and *Iudas*, and happie you, that now make a mocke of sinne; but, to bee still for euer either in endlesnesse of blisse, or perpetuity of woe. What shall wee then doe? shall wee reason as the prophane, *Let vs eate and drinke, for to morrow wee shall die* [b]? God forbid: that were to bee like the Diuell, whose maner is to play reaxe and to haue *great wrath when hee hath but a short time* [c], or shall wee gull our owne soules, and *put far away the euill day* [d], and dreame of many yeares like the Rich *Foole* in the Gospell [e]? Farre bee these things from vs; let vs rather endeuour

[z] 1.Pet.4.17. 18

The Vse.

[a] Heb.9.27.

[b] 1.Cor.15.32

[c] Reu 12.12.

[d] Amos6.3.

[e] Luk.12.19

by this to *apply our hearts to wisedome* [f]: and what wisedome? verily in a word, the skanning of this one point often in our mindes, *Hence I must, and whither then?* like men that trauell, who bee no sooner come to their lodging, but they are talking of their next Inne. The debatement of this question in the minde would bring forth an excellent fruit, euen, a care to bee assured of admission *into euerlasting habitation* [g]. A man would thus reason. *I must remoue and whither then? Hell is my desert, how shall I escape it? Heauen is the only place, how shall I come to it?* Thus one good thought would make way for another, and lead vs on by degrees to that which we do most neglect, (*the prouiding for the future estate.*) *Oh that we were wise to vnderstand this,* and *that we would consider our later end* [h], or that we did conceiue the happinesse and sweete comfort of a prepared and long expected end? This promised, the day of death, a godly man may say of it when it commeth, as the people triumphantly sometime spake of the day of *Dauids* coronation, *This is the day which the Lord hath made* [i]. The children of God whose care hath beene to *keepe themselues vnspotted of the World* [k] may call death, as *Iacob* did the place where hee came, *Mahanaim*, because there the *Angels met him* [l], so there, those *Ministring spirits which are sent forth for their good which bee heires of life* [m] shall receiue their soules to beare them into *Abrahams bosome* [n]. Oh that Religion and godlinesse might bee more sweet vnto vs, which will bring a man such peace at the last. *As for the wicked, it is not so with them* [o]. In their death they be like vnto him, of whom the Prophet speakes, who *did flee from a Lyon and a Beare met him* [p], they escape one misery, and irrecouerably fall into an other. This life hath (it may be) afflicted them with rods, but death shall come vpon them with scorpions. God shall shut them from his tabernacle and not suffer them to come neere the land of the liuing.

[f] Psal. 90. 12.

Hinc abeundum quo tandem?

[g] Luk. 16. 9.

[h] Deut. 32. 29.

[i] Psa. 118. 24

[k] Iam. 1. 27.

[l] Gen. 32. 2.

[m] Heb. 1. 14.

[n] Luk. 16. 22

[o] Psal. 1. 4.

[p] Am. 5. 19.

uing. Oh that wee could make haſt to *breake of our ſinnes* [g] by repentance, which will bring ſo much woe at the laſt. This is the vſe. *Dorcas* is dead, the holieſt muſt die: if holineſſe muſt yeeld, profaneneſs cannot ſtand out, whither holy or profane all muſt die, and come to iudgement. *Let him that is holy bee holy ſtill* [f], and *hold faſt that none may take his crowne* [f]. Let him that is profane, I will not ſay bee profane ſtill, but let him *caſt away his tranſgreſſions, for why will yee die oh houſe of Iſrael* [i]? Yet there is hope, but if wee bee once ſtept ouer the threſhold of death, there is no place for repentance, no vſe of any Satisfaction: If *Iob, Noah, Daniel* ſhould entreate for vs, God would not heare vs. So an end of this admonition touching our end, which if we ſuffer it to die in our thoughts, we ſhall ſurely die without comfort.

[g] Dan. 4. 24.

[f] Reu. 22. 11.

[f] Reu. 3. 11.

[i] Ezc. 18. 31.

Nullus pœnitentiæ locus, nullus ſatisfactionis effectus. Cyp. ad Demetrium. Non Iob, non Daniel, non Noe, rogare poſſunt, &c. Hiero.

FINIS.